

WHO AM I?

- On a blank piece of paper design a symbol that sums up who you are.
- Each aspect of the symbol (shape, colour, images) should represent something about your identity.
- This symbol should represent who you are...



INTRODUCTION TO IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY

“Trying to define
yourself is like trying to
bite your own teeth”

--Alan

Watts



Identity is both the face we present to the world and the filter through which we see the world.

An **ideology** is how we understand the world is and how the world ought to be

IDEOLOGIES GROW OUT OF SOME
FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS:



What are humans like, and why do they act the way they do?



What is the nature of society?



What is the role of the individual in society?



What society could – or should become in the future



A **point of view** represents an individual's opinion and is based on that individual's personal experience



A **perspective** reflects the outlook of a particular group of people with the same age, culture, economics, faith, language, or other shared quality

MISSION

The mission of Social Studies is to make sense of the human condition. Social Studies asks, “Why do people do the things they do with each other, for each other, and to each other?”

Social Studies tries to unravel the central human concerns about the purposes of life, the best ways of living with others, and the best ways of relating to the world around us.

Social Studies is an issues-based discipline. This means that it begins its study at the point where differences of opinion or interpretation emerge.

Everyone's perspective is their reality, but not necessarily everyone's reality

It's important to respect the views of others

It is essential not only to be aware of our differences but also to acknowledge our common humanity

Each chapter of your textbook (*Perspectives on Ideology/Understanding of Ideologies*) is built around a chapter issue.

The course is an inquiry-based course

The inquiries you pursue in this course will help you come to your own informed opinions about issues related to ideology

Social Studies is as much about developing the skills of inquiry, critical thinking, participation, and communication as it is about acquiring concepts and developing informed positions.

Part 1: Ideology and Identity

(To what extent) should ideology be the foundation of identity?

Part 4: Ideologies and Individual Actions

(To what extent) should my actions as a citizen be shaped by an ideology?

Key issue: To what extent should we embrace ideology

Part 2: Resistance/Challenges to Liberalism

(To what extent) is resistance to liberalism justified?

Part 3: The Viability of Liberalism

To what extent are the principles of liberalism viable?

UTOPIA...

- Human beings for centuries have been trying to create societies that reflect their idea of what a perfect society should be.
- Marxism, socialism, communism, capitalism, democracy...these are all attempts at creating societies that work towards the benefit of all while still allowing the individual to flourish.
- What is a utopia?
- What should it look like?
- How do we balance individual freedoms with communal values.
- How much should I give up for the better of the whole society?

from *Secrets of Divine Love*

Limitless is your Lord in His Mercy”

QUR'AN 6:147

Allah's *Rahman* is like the sky, it covers everything in existence, including us and the worst of our sins. We were created from Allah's mercy, and the Qur'an was sent like a ladder from Heaven to Earth, so that we could get closer to the Divine. Allah has opened the door for us; it is up to us whether we walk into the palace of His mercy and love.

The Importance of Divine Justice

It is important to understand that God's mercy and justice go hand in hand. The word for justice in Arabic is '*adl*', which at its root means "to proportion, to create symmetry, to be equitable." In other words, harmony and balance are dependent on justice. Jewish mystics metaphorically describe God's justice as scolding hot water that, if poured on its own into a clay vessel, would break it. God's mercy is described as freezing cold water; if poured on its own into a clay vessel, it would also break it. But if you pour them together, a neutralizing balance is created, preventing the vessel from breaking.

The clay vessel in this story is a metaphor for the human heart, which is unable to contain only God's mercy or only God's justice. If God was only merciful there would be chaos on Earth because there would be no accountability; however, if God was only just there would be no one on Earth because no human being is perfect. As the Qur'an says, "If God were to punish people for their deeds immediately, not one creature would have survived on Earth. However, He has given them a respite for an appointed time and when their term comes to an end, let it be known that God watches over His servants" (35:45). It is in bringing together God's justice and mercy that the possibility for harmony is created.

Justice + Mercy

WHAT IS YOUR LEGACY?

- Take some time to write a letter. Consider the following:
 - Who are you writing to and why (your goal)
 - Describe your role in life (with you family, friends, community, etc.) How have your surroundings changed/impacted...
 - Perhaps write about an experience that you'd like to share with you reader and what you learned from it
 - What would you like to be remembered by or to encourage/advise...